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The Use of Dialogue Reading and Role - Playing to Enhance Students' Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

Teachers may use different ways to encourage students using target language. They may believe the more students practice the language the better their speaking skill will be. This study aims to investigate the use of reading dialogue and role-playing methods in facilitating students' speaking skills. The study used a qualitative descriptive design by observing the classrooms. The participants were 30 students from Class VIII-B at one of the public junior high schools in Surabaya. The results showed that reading dialogues help students facilitate students' speaking skills. Through role-playing and dialog reading, students could practice their fluency, accuracy, intonation, non-verbal communication, and confidence. Students became more fluent through repeated performance, more accurate through imitation of modelled sentences, and more expressive through attention to body language and eye contact. Overall, the study suggests that dialogue reading and role-play are effective in facilitating speaking skills, although teachers need to ensure that the activities maximise language exposure rather than focusing solely on creating an enjoyable atmosphere.

Keywords: Dialogue Reading, Role Play, Speaking skills

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking, as described by (Richards, 2008), is recognized as a verbal ability that allows learners to convey their thoughts through oral communication, complemented by gestures and other forms of nonverbal expression. (Brown, 2004) notes that speaking takes place in a spontaneous manner, requiring individuals to consider how to structure their ideas, select appropriate vocabulary, and formulate coherent sentences while also ensuring they convey accurate information. Furthermore, (Thornburry, 2005) points out that speaking is a dynamic process that demands participants engage with one another, clarify meanings when needed, and maintain transparency in the dialogue.

When it comes to speaking skills, the enhancement of students' oral communication capabilities is understood through various elements that illustrate their proficiency in achieving communication goals in real-life contexts. Mastery of language components, along with practical application skills, is essential for effective speaking. In this study, the improvement in students' speaking abilities is viewed from five aspects, namely fluency, accuracy, intonation, nonverbal communication, and self-confidence. Fluency relates to the ability to speak smoothly without many pauses. Accuracy refers to the use of appropriate language structures and vocabulary. Intonation concerns the use of emphasis and rhythm to help clarify meaning. Nonverbal communication includes gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact. Confidence describes the student's comfort in expressing ideas while speaking.

Ability to speak English is one of the most important skills in the 21st century due to globalization and the need for international communication. That is why many countries offer English as a compulsory subject, including Indonesia. This indicates the importance of the language for education and participation in today's increasingly integrated global world (Emilia et al, 2025). However, research recorded that some students still find difficulties





communicating in real-life situations. The study identified for example students' lack of confidence and anxiety about making mistakes. Other hindering aspects identified include students' limited vocabulary and pronunciation to express the ideas (Azmy, 2023). This shows the need for learning methods that provide opportunities for students to actively practice the language.

One reason students have difficulty speaking is that teaching methods still focus on memorization and grammar. Although this method helps students remember vocabulary and sentence structure, it rarely provides opportunities for direct communication (Iswari et al, 2017). Traditional teaching approaches focus on preparing students to succeed in exams rather than on enabling them to communicate naturally, as noted by (Harmer, 2007). Consequently, there's a disconnect between educational goals and what occurs in the classroom, leaving students unprepared to use language in a spontaneous manner. This highlights the necessity for a more engaging and communicative teaching style.

Interactive learning strategies are crucial for assisting students in acquiring authentic speaking abilities. Dialogue Reading prompts students to engage in reading and discussing conversations, which enhances their understanding, pronunciation, and intonation, according to (Ping, 2021). Role Play allows students to practice dialogue in realistic scenarios, boosting their fluency and self-assurance, as stated by (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011). Each of these techniques offers valuable practice while overcoming the shortcomings of conventional methods. With proper execution, students can become more natural and self-confident speakers.

Prior research has indicated that Dialogue Reading enhances both pronunciation and comprehension, according to (Ping, 2021), while Role Play fosters fluency and self-confidence, as highlighted by (Katemba & Grace, 2023). Nonetheless, studies on the simultaneous use of both methods remain scarce. Merging the two approaches can create a more thorough strategy, enabling students to apply the language they've learned in practical settings. This strategy can further increase confidence and improve speaking fluency. Thus, exploring the combination of these two techniques is particularly pertinent.

The goal of this study is to analyze how integrating Dialogue Reading and Role Play can enhance students' speaking abilities and to understand their reactions to these techniques. Additionally, this research aims to evaluate the degree to which both methods can boost comprehension, pronunciation, and fluency in speaking. The findings from this study are anticipated to offer valuable insights into more effective strategies for teaching speaking. Consequently, this research will yield practical guidance for English educators in creating interactive learning environments.

METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative descriptive design. A qualitative descriptive design was chosen because the researcher wanted to provide a detailed and comprehensive description of the classroom situation and provide an in-depth picture of how the reading dialogue and role play methods were used to facilitate the development of students' speaking skills in the classroom. This design was applied by directly observing the speaking learning process in the classroom, recording students' performances when using these methods, and noting student interactions and responses during the activities. The data obtained was then analyzed descriptively to provide a complete picture of the implementation of the methods and how the dialog reading and role play methods facilitated the development of students' speaking skills.

This research was conducted through direct observation, which was carried out three times to ensure that the data obtained was more complete and accurate. The three observations aimed to observe the gradual development of the application of the reading dialogue and role play methods. At each meeting, the researcher observed various aspects, including student participation in speaking activities, fluency, clarity of pronunciation, nonverbal communication such as gestures and expressions, student intonation in practice, and student





activity in interacting with their partners. Through this observation process, the researcher was able to determine whether there were changes in student behavior and speaking skills and understand how the use of reading dialog and role play facilitated the improvement of students' speaking skills.

Participants

The participants in this study were 30 students from Class VIII-B at one of the public junior high schools in Surabaya. The class was not selected through a special selection process, but was the class where the researcher carried out his internship. This made it easier for the researcher to conduct observations and collect data naturally during the learning process.

Instruments

The research used two main instruments, namely observation sheets and field notes, which were used to collect data. These two instruments complemented each other so that the data obtained was complete and provided a comprehensive picture of how reading dialogues and role plays facilitated students' speaking skills.

Data was collected through direct observation while students participated in reading dialogues and role plays. Observations were conducted over three meetings so that the researcher could see the students' progress and consistency from stage to stage.

The observation sheet was used to systematically record student behavior during the activities. The aspects observed included fluency, accuracy, nonverbal communication, voice intonation, and interactions between students. The structured observation sheet helped the researcher obtain effective data.

Field notes were then used to record things that were not included in the observation sheet, such as the classroom atmosphere, spontaneous moments among students, and students' emotional responses to learning activities. These field notes helped the researcher capture the atmosphere that arose during the learning process, so that the observation results felt more alive and provided a more complete picture of the situation in the classroom.

Procedure

This approach is implemented in several stages. First, in the dialogue reading stage, the researcher reads the dialogue text as an example of correct pronunciation and intonation. This stage aims to help students understand how to read dialogue naturally and imitate the correct intonation and fluency. Next, in the practice stage, students imitate and practice the dialogue in groups with the guidance of the researcher. This activity allows students to practice speaking directly while receiving guidance that supports fluency, pronunciation, and appropriate expression. The next stage is role-play simulation, where students play characters in the dialogue and practice conversation in simulated situations. This activity not only trains pronunciation and intonation, but also increases confidence, courage to speak, and the ability to express sentences appropriately.

Data analysis

The data obtained from the observation was then analyzed through thematic analysis. First, the researcher reduced the data by sorting the notes that were relevant to the research objectives, such as fluency of speech, expression, intonation, and student interaction. Second, the selected data was presented in tables or descriptions so that the patterns of student behavior during Reading Dialogue and Role Play were easier to see. Finally, the researcher drew conclusions by interpreting the patterns that emerged and ensuring that the findings truly reflected the conditions in the classroom.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results from observation indicated that role-play and dialog reading contributed to students' speaking skills due to five reasons: fluency, accuracy, intonation, non-verbal communication, and confidence. These five aspects enable students to speak English better. Detailed information of each aspect contributing to students' speaking skills as discussed in the following sections.

Fluency





Role play and reading dialogue facilitate student speaking skill for those activity have student to practice their fluency. For example student's speaking skill gradually progresses from observation 1 to observation 3, as described in Table 1.

Table 1. Students' Fluency Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Play

Technique	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3
Reading dialogue	 Frequent pauses and stuttering. 	Rarely pauses and more natural	• Fluent and smooth.
Role Play	 Frequent stuttering and hesitation. 	More fluent and confident	 Very fluent and natural

In the reading dialogue activity, students showed gradual progress across the three observations. In Observation 1, students were hesitant, spoke softly, and had unstable intonation because they focused heavily on the text. In Observation 2, some students began reading fluently, although others still paused frequently. Their movements remained stiff as they followed the text without improvisation. By Observation 3, most students read fluently without long pauses, though reading remained somewhat monotonous as comprehension and creativity were limited.

In role play, student development was more dynamic. During Observation 1, students hesitated but attempted to maintain conversation flow using simple expressions. Observation 2 showed increased fluency and the beginning of improvisation, such as spontaneous expressions. By Observation 3, students spoke very fluently, added sentences beyond the text, and the dialogues appeared natural.

The observation results indicate that student development occurred gradually from Observation 1 to Observation 3. Initially, students stuttered because they were not yet accustomed to practicing and focused heavily on the text. According to Gui & Ismail (2024), when learners are given sufficient time to plan and think, they process language better and express ideas more fluently.

By Observation 2, students shortened pauses using strategies such as repeating words or using filler expressions, which aligns with Wijayanto & Hastuti (2021) who found that learners often use simple strategies like repetition or gestures to maintain communication flow.

In Observation 3, students' fluency increased significantly, and they began improvising beyond the text. This supports Namaziandost's (2019) theory that initial fluency develops into communicative fluency, allowing learners to process language more quickly and make conversations sound natural. Role play in particular provided authentic opportunities for students to practice speaking in real-life contexts, enhancing confidence and fluency (Fiani & Nahak, 2025).

Overall, the development of fluency can be described in stages: initial practice with frequent pauses, gradual improvement using simple strategies, and finally fluent speech with spontaneous improvisation.

Accuracy

The second reason is role playing and reading dialogue facilitating student speaking skill because the activity helps students to practice their accuracy, as indicated by the progress observed from the first to the third observation, where the activities helped students with their accuracy, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Students' Accuracy Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Play

Table 2. Students Accuracy Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Hay			
Technique	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3
Reading dialogue	 Many mispronunciations and unclear stress 	 Fewer mistakes and clearer pronunciation 	Mostly accurate and more natural
Role Play	 Frequent pronunciation errors 	 Fewer errors and clearer speech 	 Very few mistakes and natural pronunciation

Based on the table, in terms of accuracy in reading dialogues, student progress was clearly evident from observation 1 to observation 3. In observation 1, when students were asked to read the text, their accuracy was still low with many pronunciation errors, especially





with difficult and long words. This was because students were still unfamiliar with and adapting to the form of the words and were not yet accustomed to pronouncing words in English. In observation 2, there was a significant increase in student accuracy as students became more familiar with the text being read, resulting in fewer errors. In observation 3, almost all words could be pronounced correctly, but some students still had low accuracy, although there was an improvement. Some students had good accuracy, even though their pronunciation still sounded stiff and unnatural because they focused on the accuracy of the sounds.

In the Role Play activity, the pattern of accuracy development was slightly different. In observation 1, there were still many mistakes in pronunciation, but the students began to realize that they needed to correct their mistakes, for example, by repeating the words they had pronounced incorrectly. In observation 2, accuracy improved because the students were clearer in pronouncing words so that their friends could understand them. In observation 3, students still made some mistakes, but their pronunciation was more communicative and appropriate for the situation. Thus, the accuracy achieved by students was no longer simply because they read the text correctly, but also because they were aware of the need to make their speech understandable to other students.

The differences in accuracy development reflect the distinct focus of each method. Reading dialogue builds a foundation for correct word pronunciation through repeated practice, but this focus can make speech sound stiff and less natural. Role play, on the other hand, encourages students to adjust their pronunciation to ensure their message is understood by peers, supporting communicative competence. This aligns with Savignon (2001), who highlights that communication involves both correct pronunciation and effective message delivery in context. The more immediate motivation to communicate with peers in role play also explains faster adaptation and improvement, as described by Swain (Pannell et al., 2017). In conclusion, reading dialogue and role play complement each other: reading dialogue develops pronunciation accuracy, while role play trains students to use that pronunciation effectively in real-life conversation.

Intonation

Another reason why role-playing and reading dialogues can help students in their speaking skills is that both activities help them master intonation and stress, resulting in more fluent and expressive speech. The progress can be seen from Observation 1 to Observation 3, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Students' Intonation Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Play

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Technique	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3
Reading dialogue	 Flat and monotonous 	 Slight tone variation appears 	 More varied but still formal
Role Play	 Mostly flat with little variation 	 Tone variation clearer and more expressive. 	 Natural and lively intonation.

Based on the table above, it is clear to see the development of the students' intonation from observation 1 to observation 3. In observation 1, when reading the text, all students tended to have flat intonation throughout the reading, making it less interesting and sounding like they were reading the news. In observation 2, there began to be variations in tone, although this was still only in a few students and was not yet stable. This shows that the students were trying to emphasize certain words. In observation 3, intonation began to improve and sounded more lively, although it still felt stiff. This indicates that students are beginning to learn to develop their ability to regulate their tone of voice.

In role-play activities, intonation development progressed more quickly and naturally. In observation 1, intonation was still the same as in reading dialogues, i.e., flat, but slightly different. When there were small variations, students adjusted their voices to match the characters they were playing. In observation 2, students began to emphasize important words and there were variations in voice pitch, making the conversation more natural, although not all students did this. In observation 3, the students' intonation was very varied and sounded natural and expressive. Students learned to adjust their pitch according to the context of the





conversation and the character they were playing, making the interaction more interesting and communicative.

Based on observation data, reading dialogues and role-plays can facilitate students' speaking skills, as intonation helps to convey messages and oral communication clearly. By emphasizing important words and varying their tone, students can emphasize the main meaning in a conversation. This is in line with research findings (Trofimovich & Baker, 2006) which show that mastery of prosody, including intonation, greatly affects how easily second language speakers are understood. Intonation can also help students speak more fluently and naturally as their intonation develops from flat to high and low tones, indicating that students are becoming more proficient in regulating their speech rhythm and adjusting to their roles and characteristics. This is in line with research (Saito, 2021) which shows that prosody exercises in communicative activities, such as role play, are very effective for training natural speaking fluency. Intonation can also help students express emotions and make conversations more lively. Reading dialogues builds a foundation by training students to imitate intonation patterns through dialogue texts, while role-play gives students the opportunity to apply intonation spontaneously according to the character they are playing. This is in line with the theory (Santiago & Mairano, 2022) which shows that role-play helps students use intonation appropriately so that the message conveyed is clear and contextually appropriate.

Non Verbal Communication

The fourth reason why role-playing and reading dialogues support students' speaking skills is because these activities help and facilitate students' nonverbal communication. Through dialogue performances, students learn to use appropriate facial expressions, hand gestures, and body movements to express meaning and emotion. This makes their interactions more interesting and natural. The results can be seen from Observation 1 to Observation 3, as shown in Table 4. below.

Table 4. Students' Non Verbal Communication Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Play

Technique	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3
Reading dialogue	Minimal gestures and flat expressions	Simple gestures start to appear	More natural but still limited expressions
Role Play	 Few gestures and limited expressions 	 More varied gestures and clearer expressions 	 Natural gestures and expressive body language

In terms of nonverbal communication, such as gestures and facial expressions, there was significant progress. In reading dialogues in observation 1, there were almost no visible body movements; students read flatly, their hands did not move, and they were fixated on the text. In observation 2, there was a slight variation in simple movements such as moving the head or raising the hand, although facial expressions were still minimal and felt stiff. In observation 3, there was a slight improvement, but gestures were still minimal so that communication still seemed lifeless.

In the role play, the development of nonverbal communication was prominent in observation 1. Although still simple, the students began to try to move their hands and smile slightly in accordance with the roles they played. In observation 2, the changes were more obvious. Students began to make eye contact with their conversation partners. Some students were expressive, but others still had minimal expression. By observation 3, nonverbal communication, gestures, and expressions appeared more natural. Students began to move their bodies spontaneously, their facial expressions were more varied, eye contact was maintained, and communication flowed naturally.

The development of nonverbal communication in both techniques shows that continuous speaking practice can improve students' ability to use gestures and facial expressions. According to theory Glenberg (2010) learning a language is not only about words but also how body movements are involved in communication. In reading dialogues, repeated reading of texts makes students more familiar with the content of the reading. Once they are sufficiently familiar with the words, students have room to pay attention to nonverbal aspects





such as hand movements. Meanwhile, role-play exercises are carried out in various situations so that students become more flexible. Students not only read texts but can also adjust their expressions and gestures in the conversations they role-play. This is in accordance with the theory

Movements that initially feel stiff can gradually become more natural and appropriate to the situation. This is in line with the findings of García-Gámez & Macizo (2023), which show that spontaneous and meaningful gestures can help students more easily understand and remember the language they are learning. With natural gestures, learners can more quickly connect words with their meanings, making the learning process more lively and effective.

Whether through reading dialogues or role-play. Paying more attention to body language not only reinforces meaning but also helps in communicating more clearly and easily.

Confidence

The fifth reason why role playing and reading dialogue facilitate students' speaking skill is that these activities help students build their confidence in using English. By performing dialogues in front of their peers, students become more accustomed to speaking publicly and expressing their ideas without hesitation. This regular practice reduces their anxiety and encourages them to speak more freely. The increase of students' confidence can be seen from Observation 1 to Observation 2, as shown in Table 5 below

Table 5. Students' Confident Development in Reading Dialogue and Role Play

Technique	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3
Reading dialogue	 Shy and speaks softly 	 More confident with steadier voice 	Confident but still text- dependent
Role Play	 Shy but starts to participate 	 More confident and interactive 	 Very confident and expressive

In the reading dialogue technique, students' self-confidence was seen to increase. In observation 1, many students appeared to lack confidence, were shy about speaking, spoke slowly, and often avoided eye contact. Entering observation 2, students began to grow in confidence as their reading skills improved. However, students still relied on the text, so their courage to speak was still limited. In observation 3, students felt more confident and there was a noticeable improvement; students were calmer and no longer awkward, but their confidence was still tied to the text; students had not yet completely transformed into having the courage to speak spontaneously.

In role-play techniques, students' self-confidence developed more quickly in observation 1. Students still appeared hesitant, but their self-confidence began to emerge due to support from friends and shared goals within the group. When observation 2 began, their self-confidence developed rapidly. This was evident in their courage to speak, louder voices, and more dynamic interactions with partners or groups. By Observation 3, their confidence level had increased further. Students were brave enough to perform, show expression, and even understand their roles well. At this stage, their confidence no longer depended on the text, but developed from their ability to master the roles and situations being played. Students began to add simple improvisations.

The results of the observation show that the development of students' self-confidence differs between reading dialogue and role play activities. In reading dialogue activities, students' self-confidence increases gradually because they learn through guided texts. Students feel more secure and confident when reading according to instructions, even though they depend on the text. This finding is in line with the growth mindset theory proposed by (Dweck, 2016) which states that self-confidence develops when students feel progress through their own efforts.

In role-play activities, students' self-confidence develops more quickly as they dare to try new ways of speaking, improvise, and interact with their partners even though they sometimes make mistakes. This shows that the experience of speaking more freely and interacting encourages students to be more confident, in line with the theory of determination





(Ryan & Deci, 2017), which emphasizes the importance of feeling capable and having the freedom to try so that students' motivation and confidence can increase.

Reading dialogues serves as a first step for students. Through this activity, students can gradually build self-confidence by mastering the provided texts. Each time they successfully read, students feel a sense of accomplishment, which boosts their confidence. Focused practice allows students to clearly see how effective their efforts are, which ultimately boosts their confidence and improves their learning outcomes. Liao & Zhang (2023) This is why their confidence grew from being shy in observation 1, to speaking more clearly in observation 2, to finally becoming more confident in observation 3.Role-playing can accelerate the growth of self-confidence because students feel safe trying to speak without making mistakes Edmonson (2019) through this activity, students feel connected to their friends because they work together in groups and can express the characters they play. Feeling safe can encourage students to learn more, thereby developing their self-confidence. This is clearly evident in the changes in students, who begin to speak up more confidently and truly embody their roles.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the reading dialogue and role play methods are both effective in improving students' speaking skills in different ways. Reading dialogue helps improve students' fluency, pronunciation accuracy, intonation, and confidence through text and language structure exercises. Role play encourages improvisation, communicative interaction, nonverbal expression, and the courage to speak more naturally. The combination of these two methods creates a balance between fluency and accuracy in speaking, so that the sequential use of reading dialogue followed by role play can improve students' speaking skills as a whole.

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